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No. 138

House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CLAY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 29, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable WM. LACY CLAY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair notes a disturbance in the gallery in contravention of the law and rules of the House.

The Sergeant at Arms will remove those persons responsible for the disturbance and restore order to the gallery.

RECOVERY ACT HAS INCREASED GDP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, this summer many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle lined up to criticize the Recovery and Reinvestment Act on the floor of the House claiming it wasn't working. In an August 21 newsletter, the minority leader stated, "By any objective measure, the trillion-dollar 'stimulus' spending bill isn't working."

Let's examine some of those objective measures:

The number of new unemployment claims dropped in August, for the lowest total of the year. In addition, the number of people claiming continuing unemployment benefits for more than 1 week decreased by 123,000. Unemployment remains a challenge, because, as we all know, unemployment is a lagging indicator. But because of the Recovery Act, we have saved 1 million jobs that otherwise would have been lost in this economy.

This June, home sales increased by 11 percent over May, the largest increase over 8 years. And total home sales this year have increased by 3.4 percent over 2008, indicating that the housing market is stabilizing.

After declining by 0.1 percent in the last economic quarter of the Bush administration, U.S. productivity growth has increased 6.6 percent in the most recent quarter.

The manufacturing sector is improving. Orders for durable goods were up 4.9 percent in July, the largest increase in 2 years, and has risen in 3 of the past 5 months.

The Consumer Confidence Index rose once again in August to 54.1, more than double the February low of 25, demonstrating that consumers are viewing the economy in an increasingly positive light.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average has grown more than 11 percent this year, returning value to 401(k)s and college funds of American families. We know there is a lot more to be done,

but even Republican economists have stated the stimulus is working.

Mark Zandi, the economic adviser to JOHN MCCAIN's Presidential campaign last year, said that the stimulus has contributed to GDP growth. He stated, "As the fiscal stimulus provides its maximum benefit in the next few months, real GDP should turn from negative to positive in the current quarter." Current projections show that the Recovery Act increased GDP by 2.3 percent this year.

When we voted on the Recovery Act this winter, economists from across the political spectrum emphatically stated that a fiscal stimulus was essential. Dr. Zandi, for example, stated, "The stimulus plan as laid out will provide a vital boost to a flagging economy." President Reagan's chief economic adviser Martin Feldstein testified before a joint House and Senate committee that a large fiscal stimulus would be essential to avoid catastrophic unemployment. Ben Bernanke, the Republican-appointed Chairman of the Federal Reserve stated, "The incoming administration and Congress are currently discussing a substantial fiscal package that, if enacted, could provide a significant boost to economic activity." Since then, that same Chairman has said explicitly that the stimulus bill for the recovery is, in fact, responsible for a large part of that recovery.

Dr. Zandi, Dr. Feldstein, and Chairman Bernanke were all right, as the objective data now shows.

My friends on the other side of the aisle have made a decision to oppose virtually every initiative of President Obama no matter what the substance or content. Now, as President Obama sets to reform our broken health care system, they are at it once again, refusing to play a constructive role in the process.

President Obama has worked toward a bipartisan solution for health care and has made a number of positive

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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overtures to incorporate several concepts proposed by the Republican side of the aisle. For example, he committed to tort reform. He embraced Senator JOHN MCCAIN's initiative on providing low-cost protection for individuals with preexisting medical conditions. He pledged to work with any serious effort to improve and provide more affordable, accessible health care for all Americans. Despite the fact that the President has incorporated Republican ideas and proposals into his plan, the other side still refuses to work with him. Their plan: Just say, "no."

When faced with the largest recession since World War II, the American people didn't want partisan bickering; they wanted solutions. With the Recovery Act and other stabilizing measures, we have enacted those solutions, and we have seen positive results. Our economic recovery efforts are working. But the Republicans just said, "no."

The need for health care reform is clear. Health insurance premiums over the past decade have increased three times greater than incomes, and they will increase 5 percent more this year. Millions of Americans with preexisting medical conditions are finding themselves unable to access health care even if they have health insurance. A recent survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation revealed that without reform, 8 percent of businesses will drop health insurance for their employees altogether. And still, Republicans are saying, "no."

When providing affordable and accessible health care, the American people will not accept "no" for an answer any longer. They want to hear us say, "yes."

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. TONKO) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Have we hardened our hearts, O Lord?

You have said: "If today you hear the voice of the Lord, harden not your hearts."

Once the heart is deadened by indifference to Your Word or to the cry of a neighbor in need, where do we find ourselves? Alone and cold.

How are we to find happiness? Only love can melt the hardened heart.

When the adventure of sensual love has run its course or unfaithful love stabs betrayal, the heart may become paralyzed or broken.

In the stillness, Lord, quiet memory brings us back to You. Believing we are born out of love and have searched for its fulfillment all life long, moments of true love once found in truth and beauty fall into place. Your grace then steps through the open cracks and we come to know by heart:

"I am with you"—now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE PATRICK MCHENRY, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable PATRICK MCHENRY, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 28, 2009.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena for deposition testimony issued by the District court of Caldwell, State of North Carolina in connection with a civil case now pending in the same court.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

PATRICK T. MCHENRY,
Member of Congress.

WE MUST RETURN TO BALANCED BUDGETS AND PAY DOWN OUR NATIONAL DEBT

(Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I first want to welcome two people from my district who are in the House gallery today, Ken and Teresa Lamont from Cottonwood, Arizona.

Welcome to the House.

The time is now to develop a plan for the United States to return to balanced budgets and pay down our national debt.

Yes, these are difficult decisions to make. However, the folks in my district and across the country are tightening their belts and doing more with less. It is time for Congress to work with the Federal Reserve and the Treasury to develop plans to do the same before it is too late.

We must take this work seriously and remain committed. Our country, our security, and our future depend on it.

I ask that my colleagues from both sides of the aisle join me in this effort.

DANCING WITH THE CZARS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have 44 czars in America and the dance card keeps growing. The new czar for the day is the safe schools czar.

Add that to the Afghanistan-Pakistan czar, the AIDS czar, auto recovery czar, behavioral science czar, bailout czar, border czar, car czar, climate change czar, copyright czar, counterterrorism czar, cybersecurity czar, diversity czar, disinformation czar, two economic czars, an education czar, energy czar, food czar, government performance czar, Great Lakes czar, Gitmo closure czar, health care czar, info tech czar, intelligence czar, Latin American czar, Mideast peace czar, Mideast policy czar, pay czar, regulatory czar, religion or God czar, science czar, stimulus czar, Sudan czar, TARP czar, technology czar, trade czar, urban affairs czar, war czar, water czar, weapons czar. And now we have a safe schools czar.

Who are these people, and what do they do? Is this a shadow government?

Since we continue to dance with the czars, it would be nice to know who brought us to the dance.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING KEITH MORRISON AS AN ANGEL IN ADOPTION

(Mr. BOOZMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Keith Morrison of Fayetteville, Arkansas, as an Angel in Adoption. Keith is very deserving of this honor and recognition because of his work and dedication to finding children from around the world permanent families.

Working as an attorney since 1984, he has represented hundreds of families throughout the United States both in domestic and international adoptions. Morrison also regularly represents private adoption agencies. He continues his work beyond the walls of his office, helping start church adoption ministries and raising funds to support